

The background of the slide features horizontal blue stripes. Scattered across these stripes are several stars: some are solid white, some are white outlines, and one is a red outline. A large white star is positioned at the top center, and a large white star is on the left side, partially overlapping the central text area. A red outline star is in the top right corner, and another red outline star is in the bottom right corner. A white outline star is in the bottom left corner. A white outline star is also in the middle right area.

National Voter Registration Act of 1993

**Voter Registration Training for
Agencies that Provide Public Assistance
and/or Serve Persons with Disabilities**

**Presented by:
Secretary of State**

Why NVRA?

NVRA Training

The National Voter Registration Act Of 1993

Congress enacted the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (also known as the "NVRA" and the "Motor Voter Act") [[42 U.S.C. §1973gg et seq.](#)] to enhance voting opportunities for every American and to remove the vestiges of discrimination which have historically resulted in lower voter registration rates of minorities and persons with disabilities.

Provisions Of NVRA

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The NVRA requires states to provide:

"Motor Voter" Registration - voter registration simultaneous with motor vehicle driver's license application or renewal [[42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-3](#)];

- California Department of Motor Vehicles Field Offices provide voter registration services as outlined in the NVRA.

Provisions Of NVRA *(continued)*

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Agency-based Voter Registration - voter registration opportunities must be offered to each applicant for services, service renewal or address change through all offices that provide public assistance and all offices that provide state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities; applicants must be provided with a voter registration form, a declination form, assistance in completing the forms and forwarding the completed applications to the appropriate state official [[42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-5](#)]; and,

Provisions Of NVRA *(continued)*

NVRA Training

Mail-in Voter Registration - voter registration must be accepted by mail-in forms developed by each state and the Federal Election Commission [[42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-4](#)].

NVRA Agencies

NVRA Training

Voter Registration Agencies:

County welfare department offices;

Community based non-profit organizations under contract with the Department of Public Health to administer the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program;

Department of Rehabilitation offices that provide vocational rehabilitation services;

Independent Living Centers;

State and County Mental Health Providers;

NVRA Agencies

NVRA Training

Voter Registration Agencies *(continued):*

Offices providing services to the deaf under a contract with the Department of Social Services Office of Deaf Access;

Armed Forces recruitment offices;

Franchise Tax Board offices that provide forms and assistance to the public with income tax and the Homeowner and Renter Assistance program;

State Board of Equalization district offices which provide services to the public; and,

Department of Developmental Services Regional Centers.

NVRA Agencies

NVRA Training

Secretary of State Debra Bowen has designated four federal agencies as NVRA agencies. The agencies have the option of accepting that designation.

The four agencies are:

- Social Security Administration
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Voter Registration Card (VRC)

NVRA Training

CALIFORNIA VOTER REGISTRATION FORM

Fill out this form if you are a new voter, have moved or changed your name, or want to change your political party choice.
You must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years old by the next election to use this form. Use blue or black ink. Print clearly.

Your legal name: First name _____ Middle name _____

① Last name _____

② Home address – not a P.O. Box or business address – (Number, Street, Ave., Drive, etc. Include N, S, E, W) _____

③ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ California county _____

④ If you do not have a street address, describe where you live (Cross streets, Route, N, S, E, W) _____

⑤ Mailing address – if different from above, or P.O. Box _____

⑥ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Foreign country _____

⑦ Date of birth _____ U.S. state or foreign country of birth _____

⑧ CA driver's license or CA ID card # _____

⑨ If you do not have a CA driver's license or ID card, list the last 4 numbers of your Social Security Number, if you have one. → SSN (Last 4 numbers) _____

⑩ Email (optional) _____ Phone number (optional) _____

⑪ Do you want to register with a political party? _____

Yes, I want to register with a political party (check one):
☐ American Independent Party ☐ Green Party ☐ Peace and Freedom Party ☐ Republican Party
☐ Democratic Party ☐ Libertarian Party ☐ Other party (specify): _____

☐ No, I don't want to register with a political party. (If you check this box you may not be able to vote for some parties' candidates in primary elections.)

⑫ To receive a vote-by-mail ballot in all elections, initial here: _____

⑬ If you were registered to vote before, fill out below:

First name _____ Middle initial _____ Last name _____

Previous address where you were registered _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Previous county _____ Political party (if any) _____

⑭ Are you a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Will you be 18 or older by the next election? ☐ Yes ☐ No → A "No" answer to either question means you CANNOT register to vote.

⑮ Read and sign below.

I am a U.S. citizen and will be at least 18 years old on election day. I am not in prison or on parole for a felony. I understand that it is a crime to intentionally provide incorrect information on this form. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the information on this form is true and correct.

⑯ Voter Signature _____ Month / Day / Year _____

59 BQ 117259 130001

Optional

A. ☐ Check here if you can be a poll worker. (If bilingual, indicate language: _____)

☐ Check here if you can provide a polling place on election day.

B. Your ethnicity/race: _____

C. Check your language preference: ☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Chinese ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Korean ☐ Tagalog ☐ Japanese ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Tagalog ☐ Japanese

Did someone help you fill out or deliver this form?

If yes, the person who helped you must fill out and sign both parts of this green box.

Signature _____ Month / Day / Year _____

Name: _____

Org. name, address, and tel. (if any): _____

NVRA (Declination) Form

NVRA Training

Would You Like to Register to Vote?

You may register to vote in California if:

1. You are a United States citizen.
2. You are a resident of California.
3. You are at least 18 years of age (or will be by the date of the next election).
4. You are not in prison or on parole for a felony conviction.
5. You have not been judged by a court to be mentally incompetent.

Important Notices

1. Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency.
2. If you would like help in filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application form in private.
3. If you decline to register to vote here today, that information is confidential and may not be used for any purpose other than voter registration. If you register to vote here today, the agency or office at which you are registering is confidential.
4. If you believe that someone has interfered with your right to register or to decline to register to vote, your right to privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, or your right to choose your own political party or other political preference, you may file a complaint with the Secretary of State by calling toll-free (800) 345-VOTE (8883) or you may write to: Secretary of State, 1500 - 11th Street, Sacramento, CA, 95814. For more information on elections and voting please visit the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.ca.gov.
5. If you move to a new address, or if you change your name or want to change your political party, you must fill out a new voter registration form.

If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?
(Check One)

☐ Yes. I would like to register to vote. (Please fill out the attached voter registration form.)

☐ No. I do not want to register to vote.

NOTE: IF YOU DO NOT CHECK EITHER BOX, YOU WILL BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE DECIDED NOT TO REGISTER TO VOTE AT THIS TIME.

Signature _____ Date _____

This form will be retained with this agency.

Completed voter registration forms will be mailed or delivered to the appropriate elections officials.

(For Agency Use Only)

Was a voter registration form provided with this declination form? Yes _____ No _____
Was a voter registration form completed at the agency or office? Yes _____ No _____
If the applicant requested help, was help offered? Yes _____ No _____
Did the applicant decline to register? Yes _____ No _____

If the applicant declined but did not sign this form, please print the applicant's name and sign your initials below:

Applicant's Name _____ Date _____
Employee Initials _____

7/09 Declination Form

Voter Registration Services

NVRA Training

The Agency Voter Registration Services include:

1. NVRA (declination) Form
 - Documents the interaction
 - Must be retained for 2 years
2. Voter Registration Card (VRC)
 - Send completed VRCs to county elections office
 - Voter keeps receipt portion

Interacting with the Client

NVRA Training

Written Contact with Clients

- Include both VRC and declination form with any materials/packets provided for all new applications, renewals, recertifications or notification of address or name change.

Interacting with the Client

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Verbal Contacts with Clients

- **Ask:** “If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to register here today?”
- **Assist:** Each person must be provided the same degree of assistance as is provided to complete agency forms, unless the person refuses such assistance [[42 U.S.C § 1973gg-5 \(a\)\(4\)\(ii\)](#)].
- **Accept:** Completed voter registration cards [[42 U.S.C § 1973gg-5 \(a\)\(4\)\(iii\)](#)].
- **Accept:** Completed NVRA (declination) form (check Yes/No box) for each client and retain for 2 years [[42 U.S.C § 1973gg-6\(i\)\(1\)](#)].

HAVA Requirements

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Federal law requires people registering to vote to fill in either their California DMV Driver's License or Identification number or the last four digits of their Social Security number.

If an applicant does not have either of these, they will still be registered to vote and will be given a unique identifying number by their county elections official.

Voter Registration Eligibility Requirements

NVRA Training

Qualifications:

You may register to vote in California if:

1. You are a United States citizen.
2. You are a resident of California.
3. You are at least 18 years of age (or will be by the date of the next election).
4. You are not in prison or on parole for a felony conviction.
5. You have not been judged by a court to be mentally incompetent.

Voter Registration Eligibility Requirements

NVRA Training

Who May Register?

Any Person who: Is a United States Citizen

If a person is not yet a United States citizen, the person may not register to vote. However, a person who becomes a citizen after the 15th day before the election and no later than the 7th day before the election, may register and vote by showing proof of citizenship to their local county elections official [[CA Election Code § 3500, 3501](#)].

If a person is not a U.S. citizen, he or she should be asked to check the “No” box on the NVRA (declination) form and advised that voter registration assistance is available at the agency should he or she become a naturalized citizen.

Voter Registration Eligibility Requirements

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Who May Register?

Any person who: Is a resident of California

A person who lives in California with the intention of remaining. A person who has come to California for temporary purposes and intends to return to another state is not considered a resident for voting purposes. If applicants are uncertain about residency, refer them to their county elections office.

- Military and Overseas voters: Federal law permits U.S. citizens to register and vote in federal elections using vote-by-mail procedures. In order to vote in a California federal election, the applicant must have been a California resident immediately prior to his or her departure from the U.S.
- College students: The applicant's voter registration should always reflect his or her current residence. However, if he or she has moved into a temporary residence that the applicant does not intend to use as his or her permanent residence, the applicant may continue to use his or her prior residence where he or she was previously registered to vote.

Voter Registration Eligibility Requirements

NVRA Training

Who May Register?

Any Person who: Is at least 18 years old

If a person is not yet 18 but will turn 18 by the next election, the person may register any time before the next election

[[CA Elections Code § 2000](#)].

Note: Any person who is 17 years old will be eligible to pre-register to vote as soon as the VoteCal Statewide Voter Registration System Project (“VoteCal”) is completed and certified by the Secretary of State. VoteCal is scheduled for completion in 2012.

Voter Registration Eligibility Requirements

NVRA Training

Who May Register?

Any Person who: Is not in prison or on parole for a felony conviction.

A person may register to vote if he or she:

- Is awaiting trial or is currently on trial and has not yet been convicted of a crime;
- Has completed parole for a felony conviction; or,
- Is on probation.

Voter Registration Eligibility Requirements

NVRA Training

Who May Register?

Any Person who: Has not been judged by a court to be mentally incompetent.

Completing the Voter Registration Card

NVRA Training

Personal Information:

Name: Legal name required

Home Address: This must be the address of residence

- Include apartment number or space number.
- No business addresses or P.O Boxes.
- If homeless, the client must provide a physical location.

Mailing Address: Must be provided only if different than residence address.

Date of Birth

U.S State or Foreign Country of Birth

Completing the Voter Registration Card

NVRA Training

Political Party:

Check one (1) only: Optional*

If the client does not want to affiliate with any party, they are not required to do so, mark “No, I don’t want to register with a political party.”

*By choosing no political party, a voter may not be able to vote for some parties’ candidates in primary elections.

Completing the Voter Registration Card

NVRA Training

Previously Registered: If previously registered and changing personal information, complete this section in addition to the personal information section.

The client can change their political party at any time. However, if they change their party affiliation before the Primary election the change must be sent to the county elections office and postmarked no later than the 15th day before the date of the Primary Election.

The client must include their California DMV Driver's License/ID or their Social Security number if they have moved to a new county. If an applicant does not have either of these, they will still be registered to vote and will be given a unique identifying number by their county elections official.

Completing the Voter Registration Card

NVRA Training

Sign and Date the Form:

- Unsigned forms will be rejected by the county elections official.
- A client who cannot sign must make a mark. The provider must write the client's name near the mark and sign his or her name as a witness.
- A person with a disability who is unable, due to the disability, to sign the card may use a signature stamp. However, they must complete the voter registration form in the presence of their county elections official.*
- Power of attorney **CANNOT** be used for voter registration.*

Completing the Voter Registration Card

NVRA Training

***Use of Signature Stamp:**

A person who needs to use a signature stamp must submit his or her voter registration form in the presence of a county elections official, using the signature stamp to sign the voter registration form [[CA Elections Code § 354.5](#)].

Processing Completed VR Cards

NVRA Training

Provider should review each card to ensure that it is complete and legible and provide the client with the VRC receipt.

Information that Provider reviews for is:

- Elector has answered Yes or No to the following questions:
 1. Are you a citizen of the United States of America?
 2. Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?
- Name of elector
- Residence Address
- Date of Birth
- U.S. State or Foreign Country of Birth
- Elector has completed Section 11 regarding Driver's License/Identification or Social Security number
- Elector has signed the registration card

If the provider assists the client in completing or returning the VRC, the provider must sign and date the VRC in the space provided.

Processing Completed VR Cards

NVRA Training

If unsure, forward the completed card per normal procedures to the county elections office. Do **NOT** destroy any cards that have been completed or that indicate in any way that the individual attempted to register to vote.

Each person must be provided the same degree of assistance as is provided to complete agency forms, unless the person refuses such assistance [[42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-5 \(a\)\(4\)](#)].

Processing Completed VR Cards

NVRA Training

The agency must keep the declination in their files for 2 years.
DO NOT mail them to the SOS or the county elections office.

Date stamp each completed card the SAME DAY they are received:

- Stamp (or write) the date on the card below the postage area on the addressed side of the card.
- The agency date stamp determines when a person becomes eligible to vote if the card is complete.

On the Tenth Day...

NVRA Training

Send completed voter registration cards to the county elections office in which the agency is located within 10 business days of receipt.

If the application is received within 5 days of the voter registration deadline, it must be sent within 5 days of receipt.

Voter Registration Verification

NVRA Training

How does a client know if their registration was accepted?

Voter Notification card

- Mailed by the county elections office.
- Should be received within approximately 30 days of submitting voter registration card, if not:
 - ✓ The client should contact their county elections office

The client can also call the county elections office to confirm their voter registration was accepted.

Agency Voter Registration Reporting

NVRA Training

The Secretary of State posts monthly reporting data at <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/nvra/sos-reports.htm> and reports biennially to the Election Assistance Commission.

42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-5(a)(5)

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An employee who provides persons with an opportunity to register to vote shall not:

- Seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party registration;
- Display such political preference or party allegiance;
- Make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant from registering to vote; or,
- Make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to lead the applicant to believe that a decision to register or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

Non-Compliance Consequences

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Agencies that fail to comply with NVRA face the following:

- Lawsuits by United State Department of Justice or private parties.

Voting Registration Supplies

NVRA Training

Agencies should only obtain voter registration cards from their county elections official. This will ensure proper tracking and reporting of completed registrations and help attribute registrations to the correct agency.

While the federal voter registration form is valid and accepted in California, agencies should not print the form from the website because county elections officials will not be able to attribute completed registrations to the correct office.

Declination forms may be downloaded from the Secretary of State website at

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/nvra/declination-forms.htm>.

Additional Information

NVRA Training

What Is the Deadline to Register?

The voter registration card must be submitted to the agency at least 15 days prior to the first election in which the registrant would like to vote. Once registered in a county, voters may update their registrations (change address, name, etc.) at any time.

Best Practices to Ensure Full Compliance with the NVRA

NVRA Training

1. Include a VRC and NVRA (declination) Form as a standard part of each new application, renewal, recertification or notification of address or name change packet.
2. Make review of the VRC and NVRA (declination) Form part of the benefits enrollment, renewal, and change of address process.
3. Retain completed NVRA (declination) Forms for 2 years.
4. Submit completed VRCs to county elections office within 10 days of receipt.
5. Always get supplies of blank VRCs from your county elections office.
6. Arrange for an annual training session on NVRA requirements.
7. Appoint an NVRA Coordinator to be in charge of maintaining supplies of VRCs, arrange training, and ensure VRCs are submitted in a timely manner.

Additional Information

NVRA Training

A Guide to Voting in California:

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/Outreach/a-guide-to-voting.pdf>

Secretary of State NVRA Website:

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/nvra/>

Voter Information: www.sos.ca.gov

Call (800) 345-VOTE (8683)

TDD Only: (800) 833-8683

County Elections Offices:

http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_d.htm

NVRA Contact Information:

Phone: (916) 657-2166

Fax: (916) 653-3214

Email: nvra@sos.ca.gov